

SALMAGUNDI, No. XI.

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FROM MY ELBOW CHAIR.

SHOULD the reader feel a curiosity to know the reasons which induced us to postpone the publication of the remaining numbers of this work until now, we will frankly state them. The various complaints, remonstrances, and criticisms, received in private communications, for which we were forced to pay postage, or published in various periodical works, that were very obligingly forwarded to us by our friends, finally succeeded in bringing home the most mortifying of all convictions, namely, that it was impossible to please every body. This is indeed an abstract truth about which there is no dispute; yet with the usual inconsistency of human nature, there is scarcely a candidate for distinction of any kind, that does not in his first outset, secretly flatter himself that the achievement of this impossibility is destined for him.

The inexperienced head of a party, on being

elevated to power in a free state, with a liberal and generous ambition, sets about reconciling hereditary and invincible antipathies, and it is not until he loses the confidence of both sides, that he feels the utter impossibility of the task he has undertaken.

The clergyman who labours to conciliate the young and the old, the grave and the gay, the devotee and the free thinker, will sooner or later receive the same mortifying lesson of experience. Such a course requires too nice a balance, too steady a hand, too well poised a mind, for poor human nature. Even if the person who undertakes the performance of such a miracle, should possess the requisite qualifications, the disposition inherent in mankind, will always make them inclined to quarrel with these equal attentions. The pride of human nature disdains to be satisfied with any thing less than a decided preference.

I once knew a worthy country clergyman, who from pure benevolence of heart, undertook to please all his congregation. While he was gay with the young and thoughtless, and grave among the aged and severe, the one suspected him of hypocrisy, the other accused him of levity and inconsistency. He discovered his error before it was too late to correct it; and, being

forced to take sides, he allied himself to the aged and severe, if not from a conviction of their right, at least from a full persuasion of their power.

But the most melancholy instance of that bootless martyrdom which is ever the lot of those who strive to please every body, was that of a fine young lady I knew many years ago. Nature had made her a beauty, education had bestowed upon her all those accomplishments which form the regalia of a first rate belle, and inclination prompted her to extend her conquests as widely as possible. She attempted to attract the notice, and gain the hearts of men of the most opposite tastes in the worst of all possible ways, by passing from one extreme to the other. At first she dressed, and danced, both which she did in the greatest perfection, agreeably to the taste of the times. But, while by this she attracted the more light and gay of the other sex, by exhibiting the colours of the rainbow, and the graceful activity of the sylphs that sport on its airy arch, the more grave and sentimental kept aloof, suspecting her to want the more valuable embellishments of mind, that are so often lost sight of in the eager pursuit of superficial accomplishments.

Having accidentally overheard a young gentleman of fashion, distinguished for genius and

taste, observe that there was a vast difference between a well educated, and a mere accomplished woman, she resolved to attempt pleasing the class of men to which he belonged. As usual, in the endeavour at reform, she passed to the opposite extreme. She became careless in her dress, ungraceful in her deportment, and pedantic in her conversation. One evening at a party, she openly pronounced one of her old train of admirers a fool, and straight the light flock that had flitted around her, flew away in alarm, while those whom she wished to attract, soon grew tired of a lady who disdained every thing but chymistry, moral philosophy and criticism. Upon this she married a fool, in a pet, and instead of attempting to make the best of a bad bargain, continued to woo the admiration of the world, till at last she made the unwelcome discovery that she had lost the heart of her husband, without being consoled by the approbation of the rest of mankind.

Thus it would seem to be an inflexible rule in the dispensations of Providence, that all attempts at universal empire in every station of life should lead to disappointment in the end. It is right they should do so; for the way to be happy, and to contribute most effectually to the happiness of others, is to limit our exertions to the little circle of kindred and associates,

which is united to us by the ties of blood, and early association. These we know, and have long known; if they deserve our good offices we know it; if they are imprudent or worthless, we will pardon them that, on the score of ancient recollections of kindness, and for old acquaintance sake. We are inclined to believe, that those who in every day life, attempt a wider sphere of practical benevolence, generally take from their friends what they bestow upon strangers, and in proportion as they fritter away their sympathies abroad, withdraw them from their "sacred home." It is only infinite power that can indulge in universal benevolence, because its means are boundless, and its wisdom adequate to their direction to the great end of universal good. The charity of us little beings, is but a stinted garment, which if stretched too far over one portion of mankind, will chance to leave the other quite naked. There is always within the sphere of our own immediate influence, enough of want and misery to employ all the means, and all the sympathy we have to spare.

But after all there are none perhaps so generally smitten with a desire of exercising a wide spread influence over their fellow creatures, and pleasing every body, as authors. Whether this be owing to their being the most benevolent, or

the most vain of their species, we will not pretend to decide, more particularly, as the foregoing remarks were made with a view of bringing the matter home to ourselves.

Having been disappointed in our reasonable expectations of pleasing the whole world, we threw up our pens in disgust, and determined to write no more for the amusement and instruction of an ungrateful public. In this resolution our fraternity actually persevered for three months, before we arrived at the only conclusion worthy of philosophers in like circumstances, to wit: that as it was impossible to please every body, it was utterly unworthy of a wise man, to attempt pleasing any body but himself. It was then unanimously agreed to go on until the work was completed; and that our numerous grumbling correspondents may not complain of being entirely neglected, we shall devote the residue of this paper, to the classification of each species of complainant, by which means they will see at once that it is impossible to gratify them all, and that consequently, we have a fair apology for taking our own way, as we always have done, and mean to do in future.

Among the vast variety of readers of light works of this kind, the most numerous, as well as the most difficult to please, are those who

give a poor author no quarter unless he can keep them awake over his book one whole hour at a time, a thing for the most part next to impossible. These will cry down a writer without mercy, for not being able to make head against this invincible propensity to doze over a book, not being fully aware that the first and most important use of fine writing, is to generate that delectable lassitude, and luscious listlessness, so dear to people whose time is a burthen, because it is the infallible precursor of a sound nap.

Among this powerful class of readers, are to be found a vast portion of the modern critics, who most generally fall asleep over the work they mean to review. This is the true reason why they so often give the character of a book, without ever mentioning it at all. It is also owing, we apprehend, to this obstinate somnolency of the modern reviewer, that dull authors escape so well, as the critic sleeps the most soundly over their works, and consequently is the more likely to wake up in a good humour, and speak well of them out of gratitude for administering to his favourite propensity. And here too, if we do not mistake, may be found the true reason why these profound sleepers on the bench of literature, have such a violent an-

tipathy to works of wit and humour, which being naturally calculated to keep people awake, excite a mortal umbrage in all genuine critics.

We therefore entreat the candid reader to believe us, when we affirm that if we are occasionally dull, it is solely to please the reviewers, by putting them to sleep. And this we would wish to do, as well for our own, as for the convenience of the reader. While these grave and infallible censors are taking their nap, the world of little people that read to be amused, can enjoy a short respite from the tyrannical sway of these moss troopers of Parnassus, and be pleased without being most unmercifully convicted of want of taste, or lack of understanding.

Next to the dozing readers, in fashion, respectability and numbers, is the class of sentimentalists, whose appetites can endure nothing but sweet things. These are principally composed of high bred people, especially young ladies and gentlemen under age, who agreeably to the premature habits of the times, have realized, and become sated with all the delights of wealth and pleasure. These are necessarily driven to banquet upon all the extravagance of unreal and fantastic sentiment, combined with all the exaggeration of fiction, in order to escape the desperate ennui of a worn out relish, which

looks to the imagination for something to excite its dying energies.

Sympathies blunted by a long habit of sensual indulgence, and appetites worn out, or enervated from the same cause, must be treated with high seasoned dishes of every kind. The epicure in eating, as well as in sentiment, must be pampered in the same manner. While the one will not endure his venison and partridge until it becomes tainted with sickening and unwholesome odours, the other cannot relish a sentiment that does not breathe all the spices of Arabia, or an adventure that is not sufficiently elevated above nature and probability, to give that poignancy of which his blunted relish is alone susceptible. The vigorous and wholesome appetite revolts at all these, and is stigmatized in one case with a want of refinement, in the other with a want of fancy or feeling.

Nothing is more easy than to please this class of readers. Authors who deal in this species of writing, have only to neglect nature and probability, entirely overstepping the one, and despising the other, and they cannot fail of success, provided they take sufficient care to avoid consulting the judgment, which is a great enemy to this species of literature. Those who are in the habit of visiting the theatres, have doubtless

more than once witnessed the wonderful effects of a pretty sentiment, in retrieving the dullest modern monster of a melo drame, from condemnation. It matters little whether the sentiment is well timed, or appropriate to the character of the speaker, provided it be clothed in glossy fustian, and delivered with a reasonable superabundance of rant. Like one of those charming songs, which the hero of an opera stops to sing when he is in a great hurry, and withal exceedingly distressed, these sentimental excrescences are sure to receive great applause from the critics in the gallery and side boxes. Their acclamations are always charitably placed to the credit of the author, although the sentiment has descended in regular course of inheritance, from the earliest ages of the drama. Considering then the extreme vulgarity of this species of fine writing, as well as the vast number of novels and adventures with which we are supplied from Great Britain, whose calicoes we are stigmatized by the critics with wearing, and whose books, they very justly reproach us with buying, it does not appear worth while for us to add any thing to the mighty mass of sentimental literature.

A third class of readers consists of those who complain of the levity, and a fourth of the gravity of our work. The former think our essays too

short and flippant, the latter pronounce them too sober and too long. One complains of the want of a dignified incomprehensibility in our style; the other charges us with being guilty of the most sonorous dulness. One insists upon it we mean certain persons and certain things in some of our essays; the other that we have no meaning at all. One charges us with hostility to agriculture, another to manufactures. One declares we have no charity for idleness and extravagance; and a worthy old lady affirms we have no religion. In short, we are pretty fairly devested of the cardinal virtues, and have nothing to console us under all these censures, but the encouraging disapprobation of several great critics.

Being therefore pretty well satisfied of the impossibility of attempting to please every body, without in the end displeasing all, we have concluded upon finishing this work exactly in our own way. It is quite certain that a writer never does half so ill, as when he has the fear of criticism continually before his eyes. All the graces resulting from an unfettered judgment and an unrestrained fancy, are lost in the apprehension of trespassing beyond prescribed bounds; and hence arises the notorious fact, that almost all the beautiful and immortal specimens of human genius, preceded the ages of

criticism. Were we to point out the situation the most favourable of all others to the attainment of a graceful and hardy originality, it would be some fair retirement, where a man could pursue the bent of his genius, unrestrained by the intrusion of foreign opinions. No man, we firmly believe, ever attained a high degree of excellence in any pursuit, which he did not only voluntarily choose, but likewise follow in unrestrained freedom.

And here we will take leave to observe, that no writers of ancient or modern times, ever wrote under so many disadvantages as those of the United States of America. Accustomed as we are to take our opinions of books, and to model our taste from the arbitrary, or interested decisions of English critics, we are held in a mental bondage fatal to the free and independent play of the intellectual faculties. In the national rivalship that prevails, and amid the jealous fears with which England views our progress to a point of power and splendour which must dim her glories, and, perhaps, in the end, circumscribe her dominion, a writer of this country who does justice to his feelings in speaking of it, can hardly escape the ill will of the British reviewers, who lord it over fashionable opinion. If he even writes sufficiently well to do justice to his sub-

ject, he is pretty certain to be treated with a degree of flippant impertinence, or at best, commended with an air of superb superiority, that is quite intolerable, especially when he is conscious that this very critic is giving the tone to the taste of a vast many of his own countrymen. There is scarcely an exception to this remark, other than some few American speeches and publications, which were spoken well of, merely because they fell in with the political views, or coincided with the party feelings of the critic. It would be no small consolation in the midst of foreign abuse, to be sustained by the praises of our own country. But this is seldom or never the case, as the public opinion here, is but too often the echo across the atlantic ocean.

What most peculiarly constitutes a national literature, are certain peculiarities of sentiment; certain feelings and opinions, and attachments for which one nation is more remarkable than another; and certain features of style which distinguish it from the productions of every other people. Now, if every national sentiment, every peculiarity of style, and, in short, every deviation, however slight, from the literature of that particular nation whose critical judgments are received without opposition here, is denounced as

an approach to barbarism, while at the same time, every imitation is stigmatized as an evidence of the want of original genius, it appears pretty certain that we have little prospect of attaining to a national literature, while this state of things shall last. A national feeling, and a taste for national productions, must give confidence and support to our young writers, or they will still continue to labour under those mortifying discouragements, which much more than a want of original genius have contributed to retard and depress our literature. It is rather a singularity that one of the proudest, most high spirited and independent nations of the world, should submit to have its opinions dictated by the insulting arrogance of mercenary foreign reviewers, entirely governed in their decisions by domestic political interests and national antipathies.

But however we may feel mortified at this literary subjection to a foreign power, we are resolved not to be discouraged. Even in the last six or seven years our countrymen have thrown off the yoke of many prejudices in favour of the old world, and there is room to believe that the period is not far distant, when they will be still more independent. In the mean time, we are determined to persevere to the last, giving way to no opinions but our own, and supporting no fash-

ionable institutions we believe pernicious to our ultimate happiness and independence of spirit, though sanctioned by the highest authority and example. One thing we venture to promise; never on any occasion to forget the land of our birth, or to forgive its enemies and slanderers. Never will we be found pampering the already overweening self sufficiency of any foreign nation, or administering to the bed ridden attachments of those whom injuries cannot rouse, nor insult awake from the lethargy of long established habits. That such is the high road to popularity among a vast many who give the lead in our society, we know full well. But even this conviction shall not induce us to sacrifice our earliest and most deep rooted attachments. Under whatever system we may have been born, this is the land of our birth—this is our country. While we live then, we will write and feel as Americans, let what may happen, even at the risk of present fame; and when we die, pursue the good old course of appealing to posterity for our reward. This is like resorting to chancery when all other methods fail, and has one special advantage at least, that the appellants are generally released from all danger of being mortified at losing their cause, long before the august tribunal gives its decision.

CORNELIUS TAYKAONTA,**KING OF THE ONEIDAS.**

Most of our readers will probably recollect the accounts published in some papers of the last year, of the magnificent reception given to this illustrious prince in various foreign countries, particularly England and France. The court and the people it is said vied with each other in their attentions to himself and suite; by the former he was received as a legitimate brother, by the latter he was followed whenever he appeared in public with every demonstration of respect, such as throwing up of hats, huzzing, and crying "long live his majesty."

King Cornelius, as I am credibly informed, received all these attentions with infinite gravity of countenance, and conducted himself with singular discretion, with the exception of one occasion at Paris, when he got tipsy with Champagne, which he mistook for crab apple cider: Though most particularly noticed by the ladies, they could make nothing of him in the way of gallantry. In England he found fault with their stile of face painting, which he main-

tained was a bad imitation of the Indians; and in France, he denounced them for not wearing moccasins. He presented a royal Dutchess with a pair, and was so affronted at her not wearing them at court, that he threatened to declare war against France, but was pacified with a long letter from the French secretary of state, containing as usual nothing at all to the purpose. It appears he has written several letters in the Oneida tongue to his particular friend RED JACKET, and one or two to his royal spouse, giving an account of various particulars of his journey, and containing his views and opinions on various subjects. Some of these having been sent to a learned person of this city, as curiosities in literature, and permission having been obtained for that purpose, I shall present the reader occasionally with one. The translation of the following is I believe faithful; but I fear the peculiar simplicity of the original has not been preserved. It was done by a famous writer of this country, who always seems to be flourishing a peacock's feather, instead of a sober gray goose-quill, his style is so conceited and gaudy. We have tried to bring it down a little, but after all have succeeded but indifferently.

From his sacred majesty Cornelius Taykaonta king of the Oneidas, Tuskaroras, Winnebagoes, Chickasaws, Cherokees and Michilimackinas, &c. &c., who can do no wrong, to Red Jacket.*

Cousin,—I AM in the great city of which we have heard so much from the English who come out of Canada. Since I came here, I have had my pocket picked twice, and seen the king my brother, who looks as if he lived well. No wonder, for they say he spends almost as much as all the rest of the nation earns. I was very sick on board the ship, and could eat nothing but gingerbread. They held a piece of raw pork up before me to tempt me to eat, but it only made matters worse. I lay in the cabin all the time of sailing, which was three weeks. I dont like going to sea much, it is not good for a king.

When we came here, I soon found out the difference between a king in America and a king in this country. You remember the landlord at Utica would never trust me for a glass of whiskey, and once insolently thrust me out of doors, because I called for liquor without any

* I believe king Cornelius has here claimed dominion over several nations that never acknowledged his authority, a whim, I suppose, suggested by the example of his brother monarchs of Europe.

money to pay for it. But here it is quite a different affair. My brother the king of this country, can run in debt as much as he likes, and it is high treason for any one to refuse trusting him. He can go into any tavern and call for what he likes, without paying for it; neither landlords nor constables dare touch him.

As for me, the moment these loyal people heard I was a king, they gathered round the coach into which we had just got, took off the horses and dragged us to our hotel, shouting all the way, "long live the king." When we arrived at the hotel, I gave them the usual fare, as I thought it but just they should get as much as the horses. But the driver insisted on being paid too, so I got nothing but honour by the bargain. Upon my giving the people that dragged me their fare, they raised a great shout, and threw some brick bats. This caused me to retire from further public honours, for I did not know but the next thing might be a pistol fired at me, which is the usual demonstration of loyalty whenever their own king appears in public.

A great many people of consequence, and among the rest several beautiful women came to see me, and whenever I smoked my pipe at the window, a great crowd always came about.

Such is the respect of this people for a king. After being in town about a week I was told I must go to court and wait on my brother the king, which I thought rather odd, for it seemed to me he ought to have paid the first visit. When I came to the court, the person who was to present me to my brother king, told me so many things about how I was to behave myself, that I forgot every word. When I came up, the king gave me his hand, which I shook very heartily to show I was his good friend and brother. Upon this, there was a great consternation among the byestanders, and I afterwards found I should have kissed it. A foolish ceremony as I thought.

Thinking it ill manners to stand still and say nothing, I thought to make myself acceptable by asking my brother the reason why all his women appeared so large about the waists, and had their petticoats puffed out as if the wind was blowing under them. He made me no reply, which induced me to think him a stupid sort of a king. Some of these women were not bad looking, but instead of painting one side of their faces with lamp black, and the other with brick dust, they mix white and red together in the most frightful way. This difference is quite unaccountable, as they undoubtedly borrowed

the custom from us. But badly as they painted themselves, I considered it a proof of their progress in refinement, although the attempt was rather rude. They have borrowed another of our customs, I find, that of wearing rings and jewels. But what is in the highest degree preposterous, they hang them in their ears instead of their noses. The only exception to this custom, was a portly man, who I understood was a bishop. He had several reddish purple jewels stuck about his nose which they called carbuncles.

Presently they stood up to dance, but the women had a great deal of trouble to manage their great petticoats; and as for the men, old Miantonomo who is crippled with rheumatism, shows more activity when inspired by a glass of whiskey. My brother, the king, did not dance, which induced me to suppose he did not know how, owing to some neglect in bringing up. When they had finished, I commanded my suite to begin a war dance, which caused some ladies to faint, and several of the courtiers to run out of the room. The people here, I find, have very little taste; but in France where they are great judges, I think we shall be very much admired. Finding the court rather dull, I took out my pipe, and was going to light it at one of the lamps, when

the man who presented me to my brother king, took me by the arm and rather unceremoniously, as I thought, attended me to the outer door of the wigwam, which is called the royal palace. I conclude I gave some offence by attempting to smoke, though as I saw my brother take snuff, I thought I had as good a right to light my pipe. But I learned several things on my visit, and have ever since obliged all my courtiers to kiss my hand instead of shaking it as they do those of the vulgar people. Moreover, being lately assured that a sovereign ought never to be questioned about any thing, I mean from this time to treat all impertinent inquiries with contempt. I look upon this as one of the most precious jewels in my diadem, as I heard my brother king say once, it saves a great deal of trouble, and relieves one from the unpleasant necessity of saying something, when he has nothing to say.

But the piece of information I have gained here, which I look upon as worth all the rest, is that a true legitimate monarch can do no wrong. I wish I had known this before, as I lost the opportunity of doing a great many things that would have been very agreeable, but which I let alone for want of knowing this invaluable secret. When I return to my royal castle of Oneida,

I shall not fail to let my faithful subjects see what a king ought to be. I wish you would let my royal spouse know of this, in order that she may use herself in time to obey me in all things, seeing it is written in books that a king can do no wrong. Have a school set up, and whip the children soundly till they understand this matter.

A day or two after my going to court, I was carried to a place called the theatre, where I was told I should see John Bull in all his glory. From this I concluded it was some such cattle show as the white people have in the neighbourhood of our royal residence, where they make a great feast, drink toasts and show off their breed of bulls and oxen. But I believe they only wanted to impose upon my majesty, for I saw nothing but men, women, and horses prancing about in a great building. The men and women made long talks out of hand, and some of these sung songs, particularly when they were in great distress about any thing. The horses said nothing, but what was rather odd, they were more applauded than the men and women. But I will give you the particulars.

My friend told me not to be alarmed at any thing I saw, for it was only a spectacle, an exhibition to imitate what happened sometimes in

real life, and that if they killed one another it was only in jest. Soon after we got into the place, there was a great bustle, the music began to play, and my brother the king came in, and made his bow all round, without taking any particular notice of me, which I thought rather rude. But I suppose he was a little affronted with me for attempting to light my pipe in his fine parlour. Upon his coming in the people all rose up and sung "God save the king," except myself, who thought this was a part of the show. Besides, if it had not been, I was determined to be even with him for not making me a bow when he came in. Presently there was a great cry of "hustle him"—and a fellow came and ordered me to "get up and sing God save the king and be d——d to me." I told him I was a king myself, and not being able to do any wrong if I tried ever so hard, I did not find that he had any business to meddle with my sacred person. Whereupon finding I was not to be trifled with, he let me alone, and the show continued.

First, came another king on what was called the stage—I do not mean a stage coach—who was received with shouts of applause, from which I inferred that he was a greater king than my brother, who I now began to suspect was not alto-

gether legitimate. I must do the stage king the justice to say that he was much better dressed, much better looking, and conducted himself much more like a gentleman than the other.

But the applauses bestowed on these two kings, were nothing to those the horses received. Indeed these people seem to understand horse flesh better than shows. There was one horse that never came out without great clapping of hands, and his neighing was received with mighty *encores*. This is a French word signifying “once more,” from whence I concluded the English horses understood French, and in this respect were more learned than their riders. He seemed quite elated with this notice, pranced about a great deal, and at last reared up and threw his rider. Upon this he was applauded more than ever, while the poor man was cheered with the sympathy of the whole audience, who groaned very much as he limped off. This people must be very good natured.

After waiting a long while to see the great beast they call John Bull come out, and finding myself growing rather sleepy, I thought I would go and pay my respects to my brother king, though he did not deserve such a condescension. So I went and knocked at the door of the box pretty loudly, to show it was a visitor of some

distinction. The man that opens the door of the boxes asked me rather gruffly what I wanted. I told him I came to have a little chat with my brother the king. Upon this he thrust me away rudely, which nettled me not a little, this reception being so different from what my brother would have met with had he come to see me at my royal castle of Oneida. I told him who I was, and that it was utterly impossible for me to do wrong, but he was such an ignorant man that I could not persuade him. When I came to reflect a little on this matter, it puzzled me much to know how these kings who could never be wrong, managed to settle the affair when they happened to differ on any occasion, seeing they must both be in the right. On consulting a learned person about it, he tells me that the kings dont trouble their heads about it, but leave their people to find out the truth by cutting each others throats, an infallible way of settling the controversy.

It being impossible for me to sit still till the great show was over, I strolled about, and saw several things that puzzled me a good deal. In some of the boxes the people, especially the women, stood up with their backs to the stage, talking all the while so loud that I could not have heard the talk of the players, even had I not

been deafened with the noise of others calling out silence. In the upper part of the house, I saw men and women, behaving very indecently, and above these were a parcel of roaring people, called the gods, who asserted their superiority by throwing down nut shells and orange peelings upon those below. But the oddest sight of all was a number of persons fast asleep on the front benches of a place called the pit. These I was told were critics, who came there on purpose to judge of the merits of the piece and the performers.

At the end of the first show my brother the king went away. I dont wonder he was tired, for the place was duller than even the court, and the show nothing equal to the puppets we saw at Utica, last year. I staid in hopes of seeing the great bull called John in all his glory, as had been promised me. After the first show there was another, in which the principal performer was a dog, but the bull did not make his appearance. When this was done there was a great hissing and clapping of hands, ranting and roaring for some time. This was succeeded by a sham battle as I thought, till I saw several persons with their heads really broke. I found they were fighting in earnest, for one came up to me with a stick and demanded

whether I was an O. P. or not. I told him I could not tell, but I was a king and could not be on the wrong side. In the mean time a fellow picked my pocket of a silver watch, I had of a pedlar for half a guinea. So I came home without my watch, and after all, missed seeing the great beast John Bull in all his glory, as I fully expected.

Among the other sights they carried me to see, was a place called St. Stephen's chapel, where I saw another show rather duller than the others. I inquired who this St. Stephen was, when a man told me he was a great proprietor of Rotten Boroughs, which I did not understand, not I. There was a good number of persons got together, as I supposed to act some play, the nature of which I could not make out until the same person told me the people came there to be bought and sold, so I suppose it was some kind of a slave market. But I dont know how they managed the business, for I saw no money paid. The same man told me that was all done behind the curtain. Several of these people talked a great deal, and I often heard the word liberty, from which I concluded they were trying to persuade their masters not to sell them. But the man who had been good enough to explain the other matters, assured me that they sold themselves voluntarily, and their masters also.

This place, like the play house, was very noisy. The people who came there to sell themselves seemed quite at their ease, sometimes lounging about without appearing to take notice of any thing, and at others, scraping and grinding the sand on the floor with their feet, or crying "Hear! hear!" whenever they seemed pleased with what was said. There was one man who spoke with great fury and used a deal of foul language, which a person next me observed, was very natural, as he came from a Rotten Borough. Finding myself growing rather tired and drowsy, I tried to keep myself awake as I saw some of them do by crying "Hear, hear!" as loud as I could bawl. Whereupon a man with a black rod came and thrust me out of doors, though I gave him my honour I was a king, and could do no wrong.

. Having remained here until I had seen every thing, and every body had seen me, I concluded an alliance offensive and defensive with my brother the king, in which he promised to pay me a guinea for every scalp. I now resolved to go over to the great kingdom of France, though I did not much like it, having been assured very solemnly by people here, that they eat nothing but frogs in that country. When I was about taking my departure, several persons, male and

female whom I had never seen before, came and begged I would please to remember them. This was explained to me by their being servants at the hotel, and that I must give them something. One begged me to remember the boot cleaner—though I wear nothing but moccosins—another the bed maker, though I never slept in a bed in my life, while the barber insisted upon having shaved me a hundred times, although my beard was plucked up by the roots while a boy. But for all this I gave each of them something, being told it was a very excellent custom to pay both landlord and servants.

Before I conclude I will give you some of my ideas respecting this country, about which we have heard so much. They assured me when I first came here, that the people were the most free and happy, and the government the best in the world. I confess I like the notion that the king can do no wrong, and think it a clear proof of the freedom of the people. The king has a vast deal of money given him every year, enough to supply all my faithful subjects with guns, powder, shot, blankets, and brandy, for twenty years. As he cant do any wrong it is no matter how he spends it. The people pay this money voluntarily, because they cant help it. This I find is the great source of their happiness. I

shall not fail on my return to my royal residence at Oneida, to let my faithful subjects into this secret of being happy, and intend to make myself master of the whole system of taxation for their benefit.

They told me the king was the fountain of all honour, which I did not at first quite comprehend. But seeing afterwards that nobody was allowed to wear a hat in his presence, but himself, I concluded that honour consisted altogether in wearing a hat. Another thing I like much, is, that nobody is permitted to speak to the king till he is first spoken to. The reason of this is, that his majesty might otherwise be puzzled by questions he could not answer, especially if he should be rather dull, as may sometimes possibly happen. Should I ever return, I am determined to commit for high treason, any one of my faithful subjects that asks me a single question. But to tell you the truth, I find the trade of a king so much better here than at home, that I have some thoughts of applying to the next royal congress for a small kingdom, out of the countries laid waste in the late wars. I can send over for my own faithful subjects to people it, and as I shall find no difficulty in proving my legitimacy, I dont see

how they can help admitting me a member of the holy alliance.

But to return. The people here are certainly, according to my ideas, the happiest I have ever seen, with the exception of my loyal and beggarly subjects, to whose present modes of life a vast many people of this country have lately conformed. These pass their time in perfect idleness, and like kings, who live by begging of their subjects, they accost every one they meet, fear no rebuff, and persevere until they get something. They go where they will about town, carouse it and get tipsy one day, starve the next, sleep in the sun, or where they like, and enjoy all the delights of idleness and liberty. They are not encumbered with horses, nor lands, nor money, nor cares; nor do they lead a miserable life of drudgery to heap up wealth. They may talk of republics, where nobody can live without labour; but for my part, I consider idleness and begging, as perfect freedom, and that the country which has the greatest number of paupers is that where the people are most happy.

This, therefore, is the country for kings that can do no wrong, and people who will not work. Should I fail in my application to the congress of sovereigns, I shall send, I believe, for my

faithful subjects to come over here, and like my brother, the king of England, reign over millions of jolly beggars.

I the king,
CORNELIUS.

A VISIT TO THE HALL IN NOVEMBER,

THE other day, the desire which occasionally springs up in the heart to see an old friend after a long absence, prompted me to pay a visit to the hall, where I had not been for some time. On my arrival, I found all the family in low spirits. The squire sat in his old chair with his legs crossed, and shaking his foot with a peculiar air of impatience; the good lady stood at his back wishing to offer consolation, but seeming at a loss how to go about it; and the young ladies lingered at separate windows contemplating the cold and gloomy aspect of a November sky. Even the old cat, which the squire has whimsically called after a certain renowned editor of our city, because he spits at every body that

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comes near him, forgot his usual habit of offensive warfare, and sat in the chimney corner as dull as his worthy namesake.

On inquiry, I found this absence of the honest homely hilarity, which usually characterizes my cousin's fireside, was owing to an accumulation of various little crosses, which among those unlucky people who have nothing particular to make them unhappy, answer the purpose of more substantial afflictions.

First of all, Mrs. Cockloft was exceedingly out of humour with a couple of fashionable young ladies, who had come out that morning, put her and her daughters to the trouble of dressing to receive them, staid five minutes, and to cap the climax, departed with one of those mutilated curtsies which the good lady holds in utter abomination, reprobating them under the opprobrious epithet of "bobbing." Not being particularly versed in the modern method of constructing a fine figure, she did not take into consideration the impossibility of her making one of those inclinations of the body, so prized in her youthful days; nor did it probably occur to her that if a young lady were to sink so low now, she would most likely never rise again.

This grievance was in itself quite sufficient to infect with gloom a whole family, whose sympathies, like those of my cousins, are all con-

nected by one electric wire. But in addition to this, there was, as I soon discovered, at this very moment, a most serious misfortune hovering over the house of Cockloft. This was the impending departure of the squire's favourite servant, who had lived with him ever since the death of old Cæsar, and acquired almost unlimited sway over his master, who actually fancied he could not exist without him. Kindness and indulgence had as usual almost completely spoiled him; and having been lately very much admired on account of an oration he delivered at the anniversary of the Wilberforce society, he aspired to the honours of office, being put in requisition by the colonization society for a principal post in the new colony.

The immediate cause however of his giving warning now, originated in an old custom of the squire, who never fails before dressing himself of a morning, to inquire particularly which way the wind blows, that he may equip himself accordingly, having a pair of breeches for every point of the compass. The morning of my visit turned out to be cold, raw and comfortless, threatening a north east storm which is particularly abhorred by the whole house of Cockloft; and, as I have known it frequently

happen to people who want a little trouble to excite their spirits, the whole family became particularly solicitous about the clearing up of the weather. Not that I mean to insinuate that one of them had the least intention of going out; but my readers must be little acquainted with the country gentry, if they have not often seen a whole family invited to go abroad by the mere circumstance of a bad day.

Be this as it may, it happened unluckily that Pompey had been early in the morning despatched to consult the fish which performs the functions of a weathercock at the top of the stables. He brought word that the wind was at the north-west, and thereupon the squire rose with great alacrity, equipping himself in strict conformity with this information. He was eating his breakfast in high spirits, and with an excellent appetite, when happening to cast his eyes towards the stables, he discovered to his utter dismay, that the wind was as due north-east as it could blow. Upon this, his appetite and spirits suddenly failed him. He was visited by several indescribable pains, caught a great cold, and fairly insulted Pompey by exclaiming “confound the blockhead, I could never teach him the points of the compass.” The orator of the

Wilberforce society took this exceeding ill, and thereupon signified his intention of spending the remainder of his days in civilizing his African brethren abroad. The squire would have cut off his thumb rather than make a single overture to his offended menial, but he stamped about the house with evident perturbation, stopping every now and then, and exclaiming to himself, "confound the blockhead,"—"the fellow dont know when he is well off," and, "what will become of the poor fool when he grows old."

This was destined to be one of the unlucky days to my friend and cousin. Shortly after my arrival, he received three letters from three distant relations, begging as usual that he would do something for themselves or their hopeful offspring. It has been before observed, that as the head of the family, and the richest of the name, the squire is looked up to by every soul that can trace the least affinity, all of whom confer on him the honourable distinction of remedying their misfortunes, and providing for their promising sons, who have too much spirit to learn a trade. No old family can boast a greater number of cadets than that of the Cocklofts. Belonging as they do to so respectable a stock, it would be disgracing the blood to be

any thing but gentlemen; and the consequence is, that they very naturally in the end, become dependent on somebody or other.

My kinsman, to do him justice, has done a great deal for this class of relatives, who lured by the light of his benevolence, come flitting from far and near, like moth to the summer candle in the open window. Indeed I cannot here resist bearing testimony for the hundredth time, to the kindness of his disposition. His nature seems all one unpretending goodness. His benefactions are given without effort, and such is the daily round of his benevolence, that I verily believe, he will lose half the reward of his goodness, by never feeling the value of the sacrifices he makes to the happiness of others. All his dependants approach him with the confidence and frankness of affection. The intruding neighbour's dog, never sneaks away when he walks forth into his fields; and even the cats, those heartless intruders into our society, never quit the fireside when he approaches, but purr, and rub their brindled backs against him without apprehension.

He has in pursuance of this generous disposition, fitted out whole colonies of Cocklofts; and as no one that can help it, thinks of learning a trade, at present, his purse and influence

has often been exhausted, in enabling the young sprigs of the old stocks, to acquire liberal professions, in which they had neither genius nor industry to become eminent, or respectable. I have known him give money to these, when his family actually were obliged to go without, and especially recollect the young ladies murmuring not a little at being refused the liberty of buying a fashionable dress, in consequence of the squire having given all his ready cash to fit out a young scapegrace for an adventure, from which he returned about eighteen months after, pretty much in the plight of the prodigal son.

It happened, that one of the letters I have just mentioned, came from the indulgent mother of a spoiled youth, the squire had most especially patronized, he being one of a hundred at least of the family, christened in honour of the head of the house. He had been twice put into business, and afterwards sent supercargo to the Indies, by the squire's means. The young dependant had, on each of these occasions, afforded another and another proof, that those who prefer asking favours, to resorting to their own exertions, are generally not only ungrateful to their benefactors, but also careless in the management of the means they receive from their

bounty. The squire more than once declared he had done with him forever; but I had occasion to know, that in the present instance, after vapouring a good deal, and affecting the inexorable patron, he complied the next day with every thing the weak mother requested.

Who alas! hath not lived to verify the old saying, that misfortunes never come single? They are man and wife, and their progeny numerous as those of wandering beggars, walk in their train in tears, and misery, stopping at every door. Scarcely had my cousin a little recovered the preceding shocks, when the hope of the house, the young squire Jeremy, came in to announce the total failure of his new plan for extracting oil from pumpkin seeds. My cousin was the more mortified at the ill success of this experiment, as he had rather incautiously boasted in public, that he would put an end to the importation of foreign oil, in a few years.

But however we may complain of fortune, I will do her the justice to say, she is not always malignant in her persecutions. In the swift revolutions of her ever restless wheel, we rise as often as we fall, unless like cowards we lose our hold at the bottom, or like fools become dizzy at the top, and tumble headlong. Experience verified this observation on the present

occasion. At this crisis of accumulated mis-haps, just as the clock struck twelve, the tide of fate turned. The wind changed to a cheering invigorating north wester; the sun came out glorious, and the trickling drops from the trees gave token that the empire of frost was yielding to his sway. If the reader, as I hope may be the case, has ever seen the sudden clearing up of a gloomy afternoon, and the blessed smile of nature break out amid the sweet music, poetry and painting of the inimitable spring, he can form some little idea of the influence produced by this sudden change, upon my cousin's fire-side.

The querulous, ungrateful heart of man has omitted to note and record the truth, that if misfortunes do not usually come alone, as little does good fortune. Her blooming train is likewise almost ever at her side, and often if you beckon one, the rest will follow hand in hand, in smiling pairs. Scarcely had the yellow autumn sun broke forth in golden lustre, when there arrived, with his family to spend the remainder of the day, one of the squire's earliest and most valued associates. His singular character and various eccentricities, have caused him to be looked upon by my cousin, as one of the greatest philosophers of modern times, and such is my own

respect for the worthy old man, that I cannot resist the inclination I feel to make the reader better acquainted with him.

Willoughby Worrall, is a gentleman who had the good, or ill fortune, to be born rich enough to indulge the waywardness of dame nature, who I have generally observed, plays a vast many pranks with persons that are not kept steadily in one narrow path, by the necessity of pursuing one single object. Early in life, he became so smitten with the descriptions he had read of the patriarchal state, that he was suspected of having married solely with a view of reviving it in his own family.

It was indeed his decided opinion, that every family, if the members of it were only left to the natural diversities of human character, would infallibly produce all the materials necessary to constitute a complete body politic, totally independent of the surrounding world for the supply of its wants, and the enjoyment of social happiness.

In order to give his theory a fair chance, by allowing nature her own way, he settled in the country, and permitted his children to follow the bent of their inclinations without control, in the selection of their amusements and occupations, particularly if they happened to show a turn

for any handicraft business. By this means, he hoped in good time to have all the trades necessary to the patriarchal state in his own family.

In the retired situation he had chosen, the plan took effect completely, and as he had the happiness to rear eleven children, the variety of character, tastes, and occupations in his family, became truly wonderful. I ought to have mentioned, that each one was furnished with a separate apartment, in which to pursue the plan which nature was supposed to indicate to their adoption, and where independent of participation or control, they were permitted to spend their time as they pleased.

The diversity of tastes and habits, as might naturally be expected from this arrangement, is almost infinite. No two of them have the least similarity; and even those experienced physiognomists who can see the likeness of the child to its father the moment of its birth, would be puzzled to discover any family resemblance here. One of the daughters is a confirmed blue stocking, and most heartily despises her younger sister, who is particularly skilled in the management of horses. By a most singular freak of nature, the second daughter takes mighty to shoe making; the fourth is altogether sentimen-

tal, and the fifth discovers an innate propensity to become a confirmed coquette. As she scarcely ever saw a young man, out of the family circle, her father takes occasion to observe rather mischievously, that a disposition to coquetry must be natural to the sex.

Of the sons, the eldest is a marvellous turner of tops, and backgammon men, of which he is very generous to his acquaintance, particularly a young lady of the neighbourhood, whom he has been wooing for four or five years, with chess men, and ivory thimbles. The second associates almost entirely with terriers, and has become almost as eminent as the best of them, in the science of rat catching. The third shows a great turn for natural history, and has a great knack at taming mice, and setting pismires by the ears. He excels in making acquaintance with spiders, with several of whom he is on the best terms imaginable, and has often been heard to lament with great feeling, the prejudice of the world against caterpillars and toads.

But the eccentricities of the youngest son, have branched out with the greatest luxuriance. Having some time ago met with the novel of Guy Mannering, he became a convert to the science of astrology, and took to making almanacks, as well as calculating nativities, for every

child born in the neighbourhood. As all his calculations were to be verified at some distant period, and were qualified with "If he lives," they have none of them been contradicted thus far, so that this knowledge of celestial influences as yet stands unimpeached. What is still better for his reputation, he has succeeded in two striking instances, once in predicting that one of the neighbours would be a member of congress, and a second time, that a young lady would die of consumption. He acquired great credit when both these events came to pass, although Jeremy Cockloft, who, I believe rather envies his reputation, observed on the occasion, "That there was no need of consulting the stars to discover that a second or third rate village lawyer, busy, meddling and talkative, would become a member of congress, or that a young lady who wore tight corsetts would die of consumption."

In conformity with his system of perfect indulgence, the old gentleman once permitted this young diviner, to give a great dinner in honour of the twelve houses, at a time when the planets were in a situation particularly favourable to astrological inspiration. Each of the twelve signs was represented by a dish. He succeeded pretty well with Aries, Taurus, Pisces, and Can-

cer, but was very much puzzled with Virgo, on account of the difficulty in finding a dish sufficiently rare. At dinner, he calculated the nativities of his guests, and quite affronted a certain multifarious man of learning, by assuring him, according to the rules of divination, he was destined to a most unhappy fate, that of being forgotten before, instead of after death, the usual catastrophe of such great persons. This prediction is already verified.

Though Mr. Worrall often laments that the present laws and institutions of society prevent his exercising those executive and legislative functions which formerly appertained to the head of a patriarchal family, yet it is quite amusing to observe with what pleasure he contemplates the result of his system. The various productions of domestic ingenuity are exhibited to the notice of his visitors, with a complacency which the old gentleman cannot disguise. In a conspicuous corner of the drawing room is placed a backgammon board, the dice, boxes and men of which are the work of the eldest son, and the father on great occasions, wears a pair of shoes, the triumph of the daughter's ingenuity, although it is easy to see by his occasional wry faces, that they give great umbrage to his gouty toes.

But what he values himself most upon, is the amusing variety his system has produced in the family circle. As the members seldom meet, except at meals; as they pursue their occupations and amusements separately; and as no two of them agree in tastes or opinions, they have, as he affirms, a number of things to tell when they meet, as well as a number of subjects on which to dispute. Thus, instead of eating in solemn silence, yawning in each others faces afterwards, or talking about their neighbours, as is customary, he says, in families not so happily constituted, they exercise their minds in discussion or narration.

It is very obvious however, that his system is out at the elbows in many places. But he has one infallible way of explaining these deficiencies away, by ascribing them to the misfortune of not having a twelfth child, considering that number indispensable to the perfection of the patriarchal state. It is the number of the months, of the children of Jacob, and above all, of the signs of the zodiac, for which his respect is greatly increased since the fulfilment of the prediction concerning the great philosopher.

The arrival of the patriarch and his family, completed the returning happiness of the inhabitants of Cockloft hall. The ample stores

of the cellar and larder were drawn forth in old fashioned profusion, and the rest of the day was spent with that honest homespun hilarity, which is no more seen at our cumbrous and costly entertainments, where the mind and body are equally enslaved, and nothing looks bright but the silver plate, or the convex mirrors. The squire told the story of Willoughby's railing at the proportion of the human figure, because he could not get on a pair of tight boots; and Willoughby retorted with the anecdote of the squire once challenging a beau for turning his partner twice round in a country dance. Every body laughed at this, except Mrs. Cockloft, who looked rather grave on the occasion.

But amid all this simple heartfelt gayety, I could sometimes detect the squire sighing to himself, as his old friend dilated in the fulness of self-complacency, on the happiness resulting from his patriarchal system. He occasionally cast his eye with an expression of peculiar regret on Jeremy and his two daughters, as if lamenting, that their mature ages, and small number, forever precluded him from following the plan of his old friend, and enjoying equal happiness in its consummation.